

REMARKS

In light of the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 are pending in this application.

Claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kato (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0028700).

Applicant notes that the present application claims priority to August 22, 2000 in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 119(a) by virtue of Applicant's Japanese Patent Application No. P2000-251101. A certified copy of Applicant's priority application was filed in this application on August 21, 2001. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.55, Applicant now submits a certified English translation of Japanese Patent Application No. P2000-251101 to perfect this claim of foreign priority. The present application now predates Kato, which has an effective United States filing date of August 10, 2001. Accordingly, Kato is not an effective prior art reference.

Therefore, withdrawal of the above §35 U.S.C. §102 rejection of claims 1, 3-7, 9, and 10 is respectfully requested.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been overcome, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he/she telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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